

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to provide an answer to the question what were the driving forces behind French involvement in the EU military mission EUFOR Tchad/RCA. Chad and Central African Republic, where the mission took place, are both former French colonies. Despite the fall of French colonial empire, France managed to remain significantly influential actor towards these countries. One of the instruments France utilized to maintain its influence were among others the military missions. Whilst these missions were mostly of unilateral nature during the Cold War, in the aftermath, international system changed dramatically and the type of missions in which France was involved and official discourse justifying the involvement changed simultaneously. Since 2003, France is increasingly participating within the framework of Common Security and Defence Policy at the expense of its unilateral involvement. French officials dismissed any motivations akin to colonialist legacy of France, on the contrary, they emphasized humanitarian purpose of these missions and common European interest to participate. This paper seeks to examine the driving forces behind French shift to multilateral cooperation through the case study of military mission in Chad and Central African Republic. These driving forces are evaluated in the context of French historical role in Africa and also with regard to changes in the international, French and regional African policy. For this purpose, French motivations are scrutinized through the lens of neorealism, thus France is considered to be utilitarian actor primarily seeking external power.